

# ECUMENICAL PRESS SERVICE

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## World Council Presidents Issue Pentecost Message

For publication by information media  
at or near Pentecost, May 17, 1959.

The 171 Protestant, Anglican and Orthodox churches in 53 nations belonging to the World Council of Churches will again receive this year a Whitsunday message from the presidents of the Council.

Protestants and Anglicans will observe Pentecost on Sunday, May 17, 1959. For Orthodox Churches, which use a different calendar, Pentecost falls on June 21.

Designed to be read in many languages from pulpits throughout the world, the message of the World Council's five presidents says that "Whitsunday - or Pentecost - is the Festival of the Holy Spirit and the Festival of the Church. For these two belong together."

"The Holy Spirit is the spirit of reconciliation which overcomes misunderstanding and estrangement among the churches and enables them to become a force for peace between nations and races," the message declares.

The World Council's Pentecost message is signed by its five presidents: Dr. John Baillie, Church of Scotland, Edinburgh, Scotland; Bishop Sante Uberto Barbieri, Buenos Aires; Bishop Otto Dibelius, Bishop of Berlin and Brandenburg, Evangelical

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Church in Germany; Metropolitan Juhanon Mar Thoma, head of the Mar Thoma Syrian Church, Tiruvella, India; and the Rt. Rev. Henry Knox Sherrill, recently retired presiding bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church, USA.

The presidents' message says, "The Holy Spirit is the spirit of renewal which overcomes the dimness of our vision, the routine of our piety, our easy acceptance of the ways of the world, and gives new life to the congregations and their members who open their hearts and minds for the gifts of the Spirit."

"The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of witness and mission which urges us to cease being preoccupied with ourselves and sends us out into the world with its crying spiritual and material needs in order to proclaim by word and deed that humanity is surrounded by the love of God in Christ."

The full text of the Pentecost Message appears on page 9.

EPS, Geneva

#### Japanese Anglicans Mark 100th Anniversary

(Tokyo) - On April 7 in Tokyo sixty bishops and clergymen from eleven nations took part in opening celebrations marking the 100th anniversary of the Anglican Church in Japan. More than 4,000 persons attended the service in Tokyo's Metropolitan gymnasium and heard an address by the Right Rev. Arthur Lichtenberger, presiding bishop of the Protestant Episcopal Church in the USA. Also present were the Archbishop of Canterbury, Dr. Geoffrey F. Fisher, and Archbishop Reginald Charles Halse of Brisbane, Australia.

Worshippers were welcomed to the centennial observance by Presiding Bishop Michael Hinsuke Yashiro of Kobe, while official greetings were expressed by His Imperial Highness Prince Takamatsu and Minister of Education Ryugo Hashimoto. In his address, Bishop Lichtenberger emphasised the unity and catholicity of the Christian Church.

The three-day celebration preceded the church's general convention. Other services marking the 100th anniversary of Protestantism in Japan will be held in November.

Anglican work in Japan began in 1859 with the arrival of Rev. John Liggins and the Rev. Channing Moore Williams. The Nippon Sei Ko Kai (Holy Catholic Church in Japan) was established in 1887.

Writing on the anniversary celebration in the 'Church Times', printed in London, Bishop Yashiro said that the Anglican Church in Japan was divided during the war when one group joined the "government forced United Church". Bishop Yashiro traced the events of recent years when, following the war, "the remnant church extended an invitation to those who had left and joined the United Church. Very happily, almost all of them returned to us." Memories of those years, he writes, "have been an obstacle in the ecumenical movement". However, he adds, "the time has come in spite of these obstacles for us to have a conference between the major denominations, as we study the example set us by our sister provinces."

EPS, Geneva







Pan-Orthodox Missionary Society Planned

(Athens) - A Pan-Orthodox Missionary Society is in process of formation under the auspices of SYNDESMOS, the international organisation of Eastern Orthodox youth.

The missions will be the first organised Orthodox missionary activity outside Orthodox countries in the modern period.

An "Executive Committee for External Mission" has been established with provisional headquarters in Athens following an assembly of SYNDESMOS, held in Thessaloniki, Greece, last September. Members of the secretariat are Mr. Anastasios Yiannoulatos, a lay theologian; Miss Sophia Mourouka, director of the school for deaconesses of the Church of Greece; Mr. Demetrios Mubalis, a medical student from Uganda and Mr. Alexander Tsan, a theological undergraduate from Korea.

SYNDESMOS includes Orthodox youth from France, Greece, Korea, Lebanon, Finland, the United Kingdom, Germany and Japan.

Declaring that the 1958 assembly of SYNDESMOS reminded Orthodox youth of their "duty of mission", Miss Mourouka says the first tasks of the new organisation will be "the study of missionary work from the historical point of view, the enlightenment of public opinion on the subject and a special care for the Orthodox Churches in Korea, Japan and Uganda."

The first bulletin of the new society explains the aims of the group in detail and says the impulse for advance comes from "a definite, clearcut command of our Lord". Recalling that the Church of Greece had intended to propose a Pan-Orthodox Society for foreign missions to an international synod that was scheduled to meet in Greece in 1932 but was never held, the bulletin's leading article, written by Mr. Yiannoulatos, combats objections to the plan. It traces the history of Orthodox missionary activity in Europe and Central Asia and says: "With defensive tactics - such as the ones we are habitually using - no great conquests are ever made."

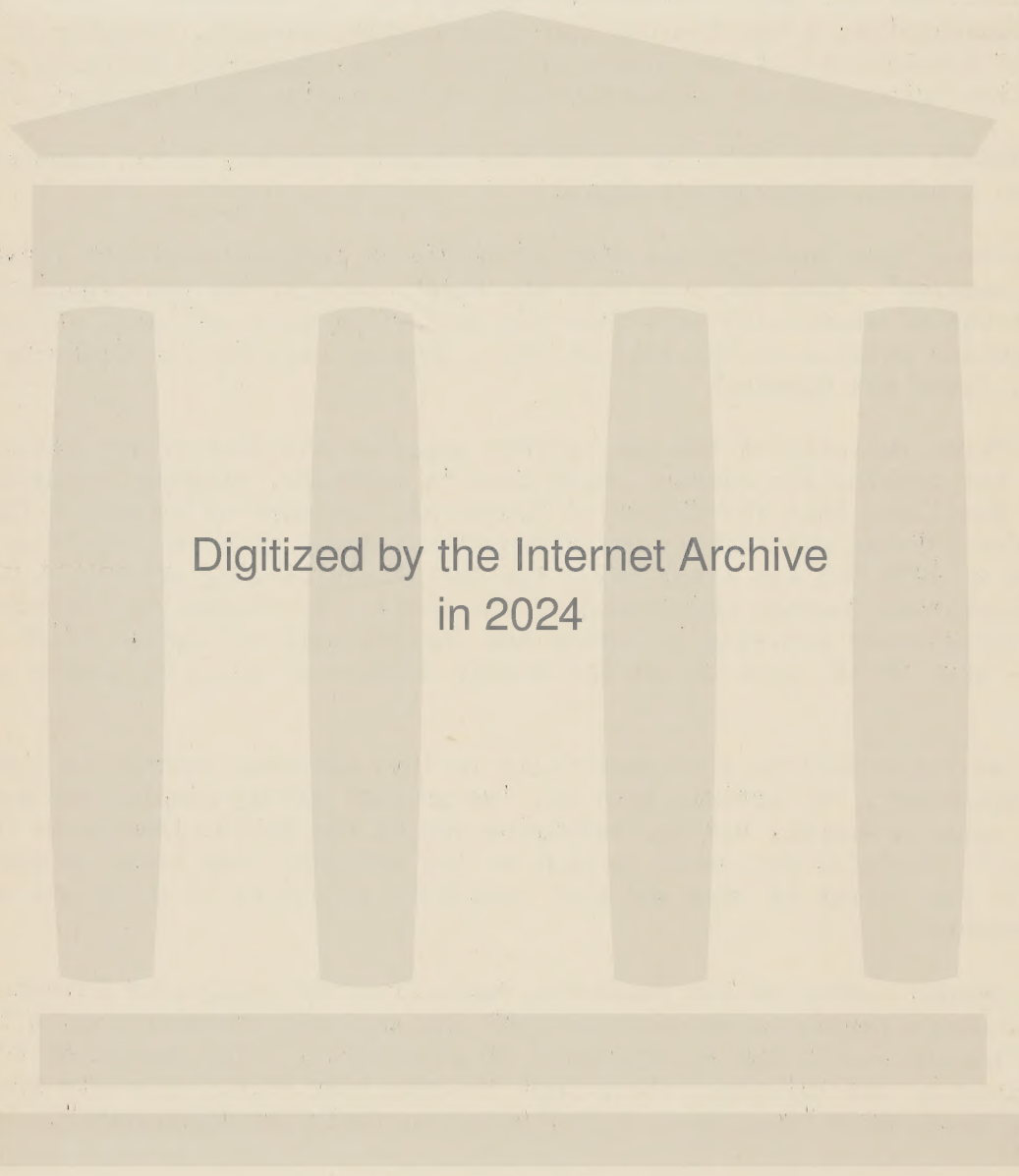
"If we let ourselves rest peacefully in this habitual inertia in the matter of foreign missions", the article goes on, "we are not merely keeping the pure light of faith under a bushel, but are betraying one of the basic elements of Orthodox tradition." Special objection is made to the attitude that there is enough to be done in the church at home and that available resources in money and manpower are inadequate.

The Uganda member of the committee comes from the indigenous Orthodox Church in that country formed by seekers who left the Anglican communion and afterwards attached themselves to the Patriarchate of Alexandria. The growth of this church is described in the bulletin, which also reports that 10,000 converts from Mau Mau groups in Kenya have "come over to Orthodoxy on their own initiative". EPS, Geneva

Stronger Foreign Aid Programme Urged in US

(Washington, D.C.) - The United States should extend and strengthen its programme of foreign aid to underdeveloped nations, a spokesman for the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA said last week in a Congressional hearing.

Dr. Donald C. Stone, dean of the graduate school of international affairs of the University of Pittsburgh, testified before the House Foreign Affairs Committee



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on behalf of the council's Department of International Affairs. He warned that if a nation tries to protect its security by military means in isolation from the rest of the world and to seek only its own selfish economic advantage without regard to the poverty and misery of other peoples, its policies will be frustrated and its actions resented by all countries. Dr. Stone said that churches are worried about the emphasis upon narrow, selfish interest in the US mutual security programme.

EPS, Geneva

#### Presbyterian Mission Integrated in Syria and Lebanon

(Beirut) - The United Presbyterian Church in the USA has integrated its work with the Evangelical Church of Syria and Lebanon at ceremonies in Beirut, attended by representatives of both groups.

Under the merger plans, US missionaries will become fraternal workers under the authority of the Synod of the national church. Plans are also being developed to give Arab Christians gradual control and ownership of more than a dozen Presbyterian schools, colleges, hospitals and other institutions, as well as churches.

Financial support from American churches to Syria and Lebanon is still needed and will continue, a United Presbyterian spokesman said, and added that his church gives about \$350,000 a year.

The United Presbyterian Church already has merged its mission work with national churches in Japan, the Philippines, India, Chile, Thailand and the Cameroons and has plans under way for integration of its work in Egypt, Korea and Colombia.

EPS, Geneva

#### Victor Hayward Appointed to IMC Post

(London) - The Rev. Victor E.W. Hayward, general foreign secretary of the Baptist Missionary Society in London, has been appointed a secretary of the International Missionary Council, succeeding the Rev. E.W. Nielsen of Denmark. Mr. Nielsen is now general secretary of the Danish Missionary Society and secretary of the Danish Missionary Council.

Mr. Hayward will be responsible for the research and study activities of the IMC and will serve as executive secretary of the Department of Missionary Studies, a joint department with the World Council of Churches. He will begin his new duties on June 1 at the London office of the IMC.

Mr. Hayward, a Baptist minister, received his training at Regents Park and Mansfield Colleges, Oxford. He has been with the Baptist Missionary Society since 1934 and served in North China and Kweichow. He was regional director of UNRRA there after the war. From 1947 to 1950 Mr. Hayward was associate general secretary of the National Christian Council of China. He has held the position of general foreign secretary of the Baptist Missionary Society since 1951.

EPS, Geneva





### Missionaries Forced to Leave Iraq

(New York) - Fourteen United States missionaries have had to leave Iraq in recent weeks, according to word received last week in New York by the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA.

The missionaries represented the Reformed Church in America, the Evangelical and Reformed Church and the United Church of Christ in the USA.

Dr. Barnerd M. Luben, the chairman of the NCC's Near East committee, also said that the compound of the Arabian Mission of the Reformed Church in America in Amarah has been confiscated by the government. The compound, which includes Lansing Memorial Hospital, a church and four missionary residences, will be used for a public park, according to reports. Dr. Luben said that only two missionary families are still in the country.

EPS, Geneva

### Protestant Reported Killed In Colombia

(Barranquilla, Colombia) - A Protestant man was killed and three women wounded as they were leaving a service in Tunungua (Municipality of Briceno), Colombia, in January, according to a report just received from the Evangelical Confederation of Colombia.

The Service, the confederation says, was being held in the home of a Protestant on January 17. As the seventeen adults and ten children left following an evening service, they were fired on. A complaint, giving the details of the attack and implicating the Roman Catholic priest of Briceno, has been delivered to the Ministry of Justice, the Confederation says. Protestant services were started in Tunungua in April 1958.

EPS, Geneva

### East German Bishops Uphold State, Reject Atheism

(Dresden) - Two Lutheran bishops in East Germany have advocated a normal church-state relationship in their communist-governed country, but have stressed the need to reject materialism.

Bishop Gottfried Noth of Saxony told the synod of his church in Dresden that the Gospel of Jesus Christ does not compete with ideologies. "It is the message of Him who died also for the godless", the bishop said. He declared that atheism, however, obliged the Church to re-think its mission of evangelism. He said it was not enough to point out the differences between Christian faith and atheist ideology. Emphasising that the attitude of the Church should not be backward-looking, Bishop Noth added that it should not be over-looked, in spite of this, that belief in Christ had to mean rejection of materialism.

The bishop denied that the leaders of the Saxony church were not interested in normal church-state relationships. He pointed out the inevitability of disputes between a largely Marxist state and the Church, but said the tensions could only be faced and resolved by negotiations that were straightforward.

Bishop Friedrich-Wilhelm Krummacker of Pomerania has also declared before his synod that "Christians should accept the state as a God-given order, but reject atheism". He said that Christians and convinced Marxists agree that differences between state and church limit the possibilities of cooperation between them. He went on to affirm that Christian action could not be judged by political standards because it involved deep questions of conscience.

EPS, Geneva





### New Church Charter Planned in Greece

(Athens) - A special session of the Greek government's parliamentary commission dealing with church affairs has prepared emergency legislation to revise the charter of the Church of Greece. The bill has been brought before the Greek parliament.

The action taken has brought to a head a conflict that developed last week in the Holy Synod of the Church in Athens.

Archbishop Theoclitos of Athens and All Greece closed a synod meeting in which a majority of bishops had asked for the appointment of new metropolitans to vacant posts. The Archbishop ruled that the vacancies should not be filled by the synod until a new charter being drafted for the church had been approved.

Following failure of the contending groups in the synod to agree, the subject was discussed with the Greek Minister for Education and Religious Affairs. When conversations broke down, the government decided to expedite decisions by framing the new legislation.

The charter proposed by the government would abolish transfers to and from metropolitan posts, except in the major dioceses of Salonika, Patras and Ioannina. The government would also take a hand in fixing qualifications for candidature as metropolitan. The number of metropolitans would be reduced to 30 and the areas of their jurisdiction made roughly equal.

The proposed new law, which also gives the government power to suspend the Holy Synod for up to two months if necessary, has now been criticised by church leaders as an over-drastring interference by the state in the affairs of the church. It is reported that attempts are being made to compose differences within the synod so that the government's move can be further discussed between church and state.

A unanimous resolution of the theological faculty of the University of Athens has voiced "deep regret" over the crisis. The faculty said it hoped for solution and advocated abolition of the practice of transferring metropolitans and the reduction of the number of metropolitan sees. The faculty also favoured revision of the boundaries of the metropolitan dioceses.

EPS, Geneva

### Journalism Called Evangelism Force in Africa

(New York) - Religious journalism is a new hope for Christian evangelism in Africa, according to the Rev. Trevor Shaw of Envol Publications in Leopoldville, the Belgian Congo, speaking in New York at the annual meeting of the Associated Church Press.

While pointing out that the publication and distribution of Christian literature can be a growing force in the new nations of Africa, Mr. Shaw warned against too great a role by the white man. Africa "is not listening to the white man today", he said.

EPS, Geneva





Gereformeerde Church Asked to Form Ecumenical Commission

(The Hague) - A missionary committee of the Gereformeerde Church in The Netherlands has recommended the establishment of a Commission for Ecumenical Questions. The Gereformeerde Church is not a member of the World Council of Churches, but its missionary activity is linked with the International Missionary Council through membership in the Dutch Missionary Council.

The move is regarded in the Netherlands as a reaction to the proposed union of the WCC and the IMC to take place in 1961.

In suggesting the setting up of the commission the Gereformeerde missionary committee's members recommend discussions in the immediate future with the International Council of Christian Churches, the WCC in Geneva and the Ecumenical Council of the Netherlands. The Gereformeerde Church does not belong to the Netherlands Council.

The fifty-page report of the missionary committee says that, in the light of the Bible, the Church and its members have to be reminded of their "ecumenical calling". The document says this must not be left to a study commission or a haphazardly selected group of church members.

The report will come before the next synod of the church, to be held at Utrecht this year.

EPS, Geneva

African Christian Students Hold Seminar in Geneva

(Geneva) - A group of 25 students from thirteen African countries, now studying in Europe, attended a five-day seminar in Geneva on "Christian Obedience in Africa Today", sponsored by the World Council of Churches' Department on the Laity.

In a statement issued after the conference ended on April 4, the students, who are studying in 22 different colleges and universities, pointed to the "crucial importance of the Church in Africa". Noting the contribution of the Church, through preaching and education, the students also said they were "aware of the challenges which face the Church today" and listed the resurgence of non-Christian religions, materialism and secularism, and inter-racial and inter-tribal tensions. "Furthermore, the Church in Africa is seeking to be freed from foreign missionary control and to become autonomous. Yet the true autonomy of the Church is only possible in total independence on Christ and interdependence between independent churches."

Also discussed was the role of Christians in the countries of Africa that are not independent. We must "equip ourselves and our fellow nations to exercise the right to vote responsibly" ... "play an active and constructive part in the nationalist movement of our country" ... "help prepare a well-equipped leadership and raise the general level of education of the whole community", the statement said. "In countries which have already achieved their freedom, we believe that Christians are called to play a vital role in constructing a responsible society."

The seminar was held at the John Knox House in Geneva and for many of the students it marked their first contact with Africans from other territories and countries.

EPS, Geneva





In Brief

Professor Sigurbjörn Einarsson, 47, of the theological faculty of the State University in Reykjavik, Iceland, has been elected head of the National (Lutheran) Church of Iceland. He will succeed Bishop Asmundur Gudmundsson, who is retiring.

\* \*

About eighty delegates from YMCA movements in thirteen Asian countries are attending a conference on April 16 to 25 in Tokyo for consultation and planning. Held about every four years, the current conference is discussing work with boys and young adults, relations with churches and other Christian organisations, and the extension of YMCA movements.

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There are only two state-recognised and officially-registered Evangelical Lutheran churches left in the Soviet Union, with the exception of the Baltic countries. The Information Service of the East-German churches states that they cover wide districts around Akmoslinsk and Karaganda. Other Evangelical churches which are not registered are scattered over Siberia, Central Asia, the Ural district and Northern Russia. They are under the care of laymen.

\* \*

Professor Ernesto Comba, for many years moderator of the Waldensian Church in Italy, has died. He was also editor of the Waldensian paper "La Luce". He had retired in 1950.

\* \*

The Sacred Congregation on Ritual has decided to remove the words "perfidi" and "perfidia" from the special prayer for the Jews contained in the Roman Catholic mass for Good Friday. "Perfidi" means "outside the faith", but it was felt that the expression was liable to misinterpretation. In future the prayer will be "oremos pro Judaeis" (let us pray for the Jews).  
EPS, Geneva





Document

Whitsunday 1959

A Message from the Presidents of the World Council of Churches

Whitsunday is the festival of the Holy Spirit and the festival of the Church. For these two belong together. St. Paul states that relationship in these words:

"For by one Spirit we were all baptised into one body,  
Jews or Greeks, slaves and free ..." (I Cor. 12:13)

The Holy Spirit has created the Church. The Holy Spirit is the life of the Church today. As we pray that the Holy Spirit may come into our own lives, we pray at the same time that we may become living members of the one Body of Christ.

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of unity, which is constantly at work to heal the divisions which obscure the wonderful truth of the oneness of Christ's Body and which gathers all the baptised together into the one family of God.

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of renewal, which overcomes the dimness of our vision, the routine of our piety, our easy acceptance of the ways of the world and gives new life to the congregations and their members who open their hearts and minds for the gifts of the Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of witness and mission which urges us to cease being preoccupied with ourselves and sends us out into the world with its crying spiritual and material needs in order to proclaim by word and deed that humanity is surrounded by the love of God in Christ.

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of reconciliation which overcomes misunderstanding and estrangement among the churches and enables them to become a force for peace between nations and races.

Let us therefore rejoice in the presence of God's Holy Spirit. Let us witness anew to His all-transforming power. Let us glorify God and enjoy the fruits of His Spirit Who has come to lead us to greater fullness of life, this day and evermore.

The Presidents of the World Council of Churches

(Dr.) John Baillie - Edinburgh  
(Bishop) Sante Uberto Barbieri - Buenos Aires  
(Bishop) Otto Dibelius - Berlin  
(Metropolitan) Juhanon Mar Thoma - Tiruvella  
(Bishop) Henry Knox Sherrill - Boxford, Mass.

A prayer by Archbishop William Temple:

O blessed Jesu, Love and Truth of God incarnate, cleanse us from all that hinders or distorts our vision of Thee. So fill us with trust in Thee that we cease from our striving and rest in Thee. Thou Light of the world, so shine in our hearts that the rays of Thy brightness, now known to us in our separation, may be gathered into the pure radiance of Thy glory manifested through us in our unity in Thee. Thou Lamb of God, that takest away the sin of the world, wash our spirits clean from sin. By the mystery of Thy holy Incarnation, by Thine Agony and Bloody Sweat, by Thy Cross and Passion, by Thy glorious Resurrection and Ascension, and by the Coming of the Holy Ghost, unite us with Thyself and in Thyself one with another, that we may be one with and in Thee as Thou art one with the Father, that the world may believe that Thou art its Saviour, God blessed for ever. Amen.

